THE MURDER

—OF—

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Planned and Executed by Jesuit Priests.

THE IRONCLAD AGE,
INDIANAPOLIS, IND., 1893.

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PLANNED AND EXECUTED BY JESUIT PRIESTS.

Ninety miles northwest of St. Paul, Minnesota, is the little village of St. Joseph, settled by Roman Catholics, and with a college for the education of priests. On the 14th of April, 1865, at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, two men drove up to the village hotel; one was the Rev. F. A. Conwell, chaplain of the First Minnesota Regiment, the other was Horace P. Bennett, a resident of St. Cloud, about ten miles eastward. While Mr. Bennett was attending to the horses in the barn, the landlord, J. H. Linneman, who had charge of the friary and was a purveyor for the priests; told chaplain Conwell that President Lincoln and Secretary Seward were assassinated. And when Mr. Bennett returned from the barn to the tavern, the landlord repeated the statement to both his guests.

This was not later than 6:30 P. M., and the assassination of Lincoln did not occur until about 10 P. M. Allowing for the difference in time between St. Joseph and Washington, the news of the assassination had apparently reached St. Joseph at least two hours before it occurred!

Early the next morning the two men went to St. Cloud, arriving there about 8 o'clock. There Mr. Conwell told the hotel keeper, Haworth, what he had heard about the assassination of Lincoln and Seward. He told it also to several other men. None of them had heard such news. The nearest railroad station from St. Joseph was forty miles, and the nearest telegraph eighty miles.

The next day, April 16th, was Sunday and Chaplain Conwell started for church, where he was to preach. On his way a copy of a telegram was handed him announcing the assassination of Lincoln and Seward.

On Monday, April 17th, Mr. Conwell addressed the St. Paul Press the following paragraph:—

A STRANGE COINCIDENCE.

"At 6:30 P. M., Friday last, April 14th, I was told, as an item of news, eight miles west of this place (St. Cloud,) that Lincoln and Seward had been assassinated."

This was published, but the fact being discredited by the editor, another communication was sent by Mr. Conwell, which was printed as follows:—

"The integrity of history requires that the above coincidence be established. And if any one calls it in question, then proofs more ample than reared their sanguinary shadows to comfort the traitor can now be given."

Was this merely "a strange coincidence?" Emphatically no! The priests of St. Joseph knew that Abraham Lincoln and other heads of the national Government were to be assassinated on Friday, April 14, 1865.

The first intimation that came to the ears of

Abraham Lincoln that he was to become a victim to the vengeance of the Romish priesthood was as early as October, 1856. Twice in that year he had defended a Catholic priest, Father Chiniquy, of St. Anne, (Illinois,) before a jury, on a false accusation of crime. The first trial was in May, 1856, at Urbana, seventy miles distant from the home of the accused. Mr. Lincoln demolished the testimony of two perjured priests and his client would have been acquitted but for the blunder of allowing a single Roman Catholic on the jury.

The case was tried again in October following. The testimony of a priest named LeBelle, against the character of Father Chiniquy was of such a nature as to horrify everybody. The cross-examination by Mr. Lincoln did much to break the force of the direct testimony, but he feared its effects upon a jury unacquainted with the character of his client. When the court adjourned in the evening Mr. Lincoln said:—

"My dear Mr. Chiniquy, though I hope tomorrow to destroy the testimony of LeBelle, I must concede that I see great danger ahead. I feel that the jurymen think you guilty, and that you will be condemned to a heavy penalty or to the penitentiary, though I an sure you are perfectly innocent. It is very probable that we shall have to confront LeBelle's sister to-morrow, who will confirm the false testimony of her brother. Her alleged sickness is doubtless a feint, in order that her evidence may come in after that of her brother. And perhaps we shall have to meet her testimony as taken before some local justice, which will be all the harder to rebut. That woman is evidently in the hands of Bishop O'Regan and her brother, ready to swear to anything they order her. Nothing is so difficult to refute as female testimony, particularly when the woman is absent from court. The only way to be sure of a favorable verdict tomorrow is, that God Almighty would take part and show your innocence. Go to him, for he alone can save you."

These words are as recorded by Father Chiniquy himself, and they are perhaps a little colored, coming through the medium of a very pious and conscientious priest, who was soon to renounce the error of Papacy and become a devout Protestant. Sadly

Father Chiniquy betook himself to his room, where, through the night, he wrestled in prayer. It was an awful night of agony. But at 3 o'clock there was loud knocking at his door. Quickly the tearful priest opened it and there stood Abraham Lincoln who said:—

"Cheer up, my dear Chiniquy, I have the perjured priests in my hands. Their diabolical plot is known and if they do not fly away before the dawn of day they will surely be lynched. Bless the Lord you are saved."

The next morning the court-house could not contain the crowd that came to see the result of that trial. The perjured priest LeBelle had fled, but there were numerous other holy fathers present hoping to witness the condemnation of the French Canadian priest. Judge David Davis took his seat on the bench and the complainant Spink, a tool of Bishop O'Regan, rose pale and trembling to ask to be allowed to withdraw the prosecution. The motion was of course granted, but the miserable priests in attendance were then regaled with a most eloquent and scathing speech by Abraham Lincoln on the rascality of this prosecution, and the infamous character of the Romish priesthood in general.

Accepting a fee of only fifty dollars for his services, Lincoln turned to his client and said, "Father Chiniquy, what makes you weep? You ought to be the most happy man alive; you have beaten your enemies and gained a most glorious victory."

"Dear Mr. Lincoln," answered the priest, "the joy I should naturally feel for such a victory is turned to grief when I think of its consequence to you. Not less than ten or twelve Jesuit priests came from Chicago and St. Louis to hear my sentence of condemnation. But instead of that you have brought the thunders of heaven on their heads; you have made the walls of the court-house tremble with your denunciation of their infamy. They are enraged, and I fear that I have read your death sentence in their bloody eyes."

At first Lincoln treated the warning lightly, but afterwards said, "I know the Jesuits never forget or forgive; but what matters it how or where a man dies, provided it is at the post of duty?"

The election of Lincoln to the presidency was unanimously opposed by the Catholic priests. The Church of Rome looked upon the division between North and South as her golden opportunity in America. She ordered her elder son, the Emperor of France, to send an army to Mexico so as to be ready to help crush the Northern States. She bade the bishops, priests, and people to vote in opposition to Abraham Lincoln. Only one bishop dared to disobey.

Father Chiniquy had now renounced the Papist creed and became a devout Protestant. At the end of August 1861, a Roman priest whom he had persuaded to leave the errors of Popery, disclosed to him a plot to assassinate the President. He thought it his duty to go and tell him of it. He was received with great cordiality by Mr. Lincoln, who said:—

"You see that your friends, the Jesuits, have not killed me yet. But they would have done it when I went through Baltimore had I not defeated their plans by passing incognito a few hours before they expected me. We have the proof that the company selected and organized to murder me was led by a rabid Roman Catholic named Byrne, and that in the gang were two disguised priests. I am sorry to have so little time to see you, but I will not let you go before telling you that a few days ago Prof. Morse told me that when he was in Rome, not long ago, he found the proofs of a formidable conspiracy against this country and its institutions. It is evident that it is to the intrigues and emissaries of the Pope that we owe, in a great part, this horrible Civil War."

The next day, Chiniquy was received again by the President. "I want your views," said Lincoln, "about a thing that is exceedingly puzzling to me. A great number of Democratic papers have been sent to me lately, containing statements that I am an apostate Roman Catholic. No priest of Rome ever laid his hand on my head. Tell me what is the meaning of these falsehoods?"

"It means your sentence of death," said Chiniquy, "and I have it from the lips of a converted priest that in order to excite the fanaticism of Roman Catholic murderers, the priests have invented the story of your being born a Catholic and baptized by a priest. An apostate from the Church of Rome is an outcast who has no right to live. Here is a copy of a decree of Gregory VII., proclaiming that the killing of an apostate or a heretic is not murder. Such is the canon law of the Catholic Church."

Realizing the imminent danger Mr. Lincoln said:—

"I repeat to you what I said at Urbana in 1856, when you first warned me against the Jesuits. But I will now add that I have a presentiment that God will call me through the hand of an assassin. Let his will be done. I feel more and more that it is not against the South alone we are fighting, but against the Pope of Rome and his perfidious Jesuits, who are the principal rulers of the South. The great majority of the Catholic bishops, priests and laymen, are rebels in heart, and, with few exceptions, they are pro-Slavery! I understand now why the patriots of France were compelled to kill so many priests and monks; they were and always are the enemies of Liberty."

Again, in June, 1862, Father Chiniquy called on the President to warn him against impending dangers, but could only shake hands with him. It was just after the grand victory of the Monitor over the Merrimac, and the conquest of New Orleans by Admiral Farragut, and Mr. Lincoln was too busy to grant an interview.

Once more in June, 1864, came Chiniquy to Washington, and the President managed to have an interview with him by taking him in his carriage to visit the wounded soldiers in the hospital. Mr. Lincoln said:—

"This war would never have been possible without the sinister influence of the Jesuits. We owe it all to Popery. I conceal this from the knowledge of the nation, because if the people knew what I do, this would become a religious war and assume a tenfold more savage and bloody character. If the people could know what Prof. Morse has told me of the plots at Rome to destroy this

Republic, if they could realize that the priests, monks, and nuns who land on our shores under the pretext of propagating their religion, teaching our children, and nursing the sick in our hospitals, are only the emissaries of the Pope and the other despots of Europe, to undermine our institutions and prepare a reign of anarchy here as they have done in Ireland, in Mexico, and in Spain, the Protestants both North and South would surely unite to exterminate the priests of Rome."

The President then asked Mr. Chiniquy if he had read the letter of the Pope to Jeff Davis; and if so what he thought of it. The ex-priest replied:—

"My dear President, that is just what brought me here again. That letter is a poisoned arrow aimed by the Pope at you personally. You know how many liberty-loving Irish, German, and French Catholics have been fighting for the Union. To detach these men from the ranks of the Northern armies has been the aim of the Jesuits. Secret and pressing letters have been addressed from Rome to the bishops, ordering them to weaken your armies by detaching these men. The bishops answered that they could not do it without exposing themselves to death, but they advised the Pope to recognize at once the legitimacy of the Southern Republic, and to take Jeff Davis under his protection by a letter which would be read everywhere. By that letter his blind slaves understand that you are outraging the God of heaven and earth by continuing this bloody war to subdue a nation whose legitimacy is recognized by God's vicegerent. That letter means that you are not only an apostate whom every Catholic has a right to kill, but you are a lawless brigand whom every Catholic ought to kill. This, my dear President is not a fanciful interpretation of my own, it is the unanimous explanation given me by a great number of priests of Rome, with whom I have had occasion to speak on this subject. I conjure you therefore to protect your precious life."

The President replied at great length, saying:—

"You confirm me in my views of the Pope's letter, and Prof. Morse is of the same mind with you. Since the publication of that letter there have been many desertions. But Gen. Sheridan remains true to his oath of fidelity and is worth a whole army by his ability and courage. Gen. Meade has gained the battle at Gettysburgh, but he was surrounded by such heroes as Reynolds, Wadsworth, Slocum, Sickles, Hancock, Howard, and others. And yet he let the rebel army escape. When he was to order the pursuit a stranger came to him in haste; that stranger was a disguised Jesuit. After ten minutes conversation with him Meade made such arrangements for the pursuit that the enemy escaped almost untouched, with the loss of only two guns. The New York draft riots were the work of Bishop Hughes and his emissaries. We have the proofs in hand of that. I wrote to Bishop Hughes,

telling him that the whole country would hold him responsible if he did not stop the riots at once. He then gathered the rioters around his palace, called them his dear friends, invited them to go back home peacefully, and they obeyed. The Pope and his Jesuits have abetted and supported the rebellion from the first gunshot at Fort Sumter by the rabid Romanist Beauregard. They are helping the Roman Catholic Semmes on the ocean. I have the proof in hand that Bishop Hughes, whom I sent to Rome in the hope that he would induce the Pope to urge American Catholics to be true to their oath of allegiance, and whom I thanked publicly, under the belief that he had acted honestly according to his promise to me, is the very man who advised the Pope to recognize the Southern Confederacy. My embassadors in Italy, France, and England, as well as Prof. Morse, have warned me against the plots of Jesuits. But I see no other safeguard against those murderers than to be always ready to die, as Christ advises it. We must all die sooner or later, and it makes very little difference to me whether I die by a dagger thrust through my breast or from an inflammation of the lungs."

Then taking his Bible, the President opened it and read from Deuteronomy iii. 22-28 where God told Moses to go up to the top of Pisgah and behold the promised land, for he would not be allowed to pass over Jordan. "My dear Father Chiniquy," said Lincoln, "I have read these strange and beautiful words several times in the last five or six weeks, and the more I read them the more it seems to me that God has written them for me as well as Moses."

On the 14th of April, 1865, at ten o'clock in the evening President Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theatre, and at the same hour Lewis Payne attempted to murder Wm. H. Seward. Two or three hours before this occurred a Catholic landlord at St. Joseph, Minn., told Francis A. Conwell and Horace P. Bennett that Lincoln and Seward were assassinated. The two men make affidavit of the fact, sworn to September 6, and October 18, 1883. Landlord Linneman, purveyor for the priests, refuses to swear, but makes a written declaration October 20, 1883, duly signed, saying that he told Mr. Conwell and Mr. Bennett that "he heard this rumor in his store from people who came in and

out; but he cannot remember from whom." That lapse of memory probably saved the landlord's life. The priests of St. Joseph were cognizant of the plot to assassinate Lincoln and Seward.

Without a single exception the conspirators were Roman Catholics. It is true that Atzeroth, Payne, and Harold asked for Protestant ministers when they were to be hung, but they had been considered Catholics till then. John Wilkes Booth was a proselyte to Catholicism, and so were Atzeroth, Payne, and Harold. But had their father confessors appeared with them on the scaffold that would have opened the eyes of the American people to clearly see that the assassinations of Lincoln and Seward were planned and executed by Jesuit priests. The murderers were instructed to conceal their religion. Such is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. St. Liguori says:—

"It is often more to the glory of God and the good of our neighbor to conceal our religious faith, as when we live among heretics we can more easily do them good in that way; or if, by declaring our religion, we cause some disturbances, or deaths, or even the wrath of the tyrant (Liguori Theologia, ii. 3.)"

Dr. Mudd, at whose place Booth stopped in his flight was a Catholic, and so was Garret, in whose barn Booth was killed.

After the murder Father Chiniquy came to Washington in disguise. He found that the influence of Rome at the Capitol was almost supreme. The only statesman who dared to face the nefarious influence of Rome was General Baker. But several other statesmen confessed that without doubt the Jesuits were at the bottom of the plot; and sometimes this would appear so clearly in evidence before the military tribunal that it was feared it could not be kept from the public. Mrs. Surratt was a Catholic, and her house was the common rendezvous of the priests. With a little more pressure on the witnesses many of the priests would have been compromised. But the civil war was hardly over, and the

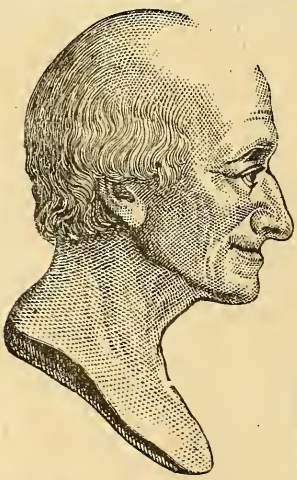
Confederacy, though broken down, was still living in millions of hearts; formidable elements of discord were still existing, to which the hanging or exiling of the guilty priests would give new life. Riots upon riots would follow. It was therefore concluded to be the best policy to punish only those who were publicly and visibly guilty, so that the verdict might receive the approbation of all, without creating new bad feelings. And this, they said, was the policy of the late President; for there was nothing he so much feared as a war between Protestants and Catholics.

It is evident that a very elaborate plan of escape for the murderers had been arranged by the priests of Rome. The priest Charles Boucher swears that a few days after the murder John Surratt was sent to him by Father Lapierre of Montreal, that he kept him concealed in his parsonage from the end of April to the end of July; that then he took him back to Lapierre, who kept him secreted in his own father's house, under the very shadow of the palace of Bishop Bourbet, where he remained until September; that thence he was taken in disguise by himself and Lapierre to Quebec. It further appears that he was taken from Quebec to an ocean steamer September 15, by Lapierre, who introduced him as McCarty. And who was Lapierre? The canon and confidential servant of Bishop Bourbet of Montreal. Lapierre and Boucher, who accompanied Surratt in the carriage, were the ambassadors and representatives of the Pope. Surratt was sent to Rome, where he enlisted as a Zouave under the name of Watson. Our Government found him out, and the Pope was forced to give him up. But in doing so the Jesuits managed to have him escape to Egypt. There he was arrested, extradited, brought to Washington, and tried. But two or three of the jurymen were Catholics who had been taught that the killing of a heretic

is no murder. The jury disagreed, and the Government was forced to let the murderer go free.

The above account of the murder of Abraham Lincoln is only an abridgement from Father Chiniquy's "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," 30th edition, 832 pages, published in Chicago by Adam Craig. Chiniquy will be 84 years old on the 30th of July. He claims to have made about 50,000 converts from Romanism to Protestantism.

W. H. B.



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